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Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Aeronautics Division

Board Report:
Signage Plan for Drone "No Fly Zones" around Airports, New Initiatives at Westover Metropolitan Airport & FAA Airport 5010 Inspection Program Updates

Monday December 16, 2019

Presented to:
Board of Directors

Presented by:
Aeronautics Division
- Dr. Jeff DeCarlo

Signage Plan for Drone “No Fly Zones”

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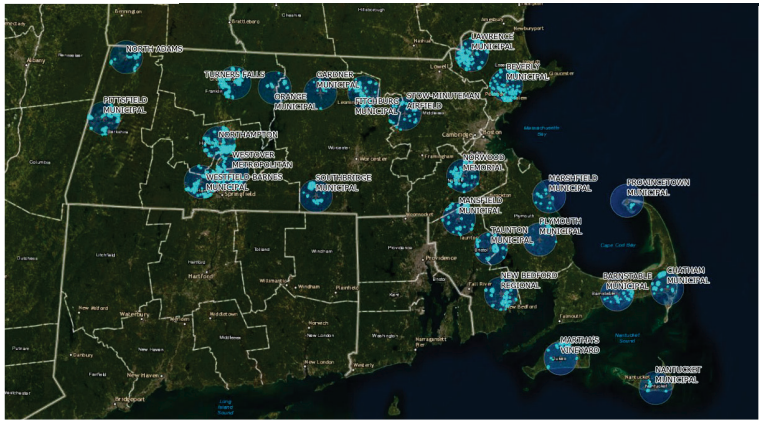
- Aeronautics is initiating a “No Drone Zone” sign program to inform the general public where drones should not be flown
- FAA regulations prohibit drone operations within 5 miles of an airport without prior permission from the airport manager
- Drones are also prohibited from flying directly over people
- “No Drone Zone” signs will be installed at parks, playgrounds, and fields where drones are likely to be flown
- The MassDOT Sign Shop is manufacturing the initial 60 signs to be distributed to airports prior to the holiday season

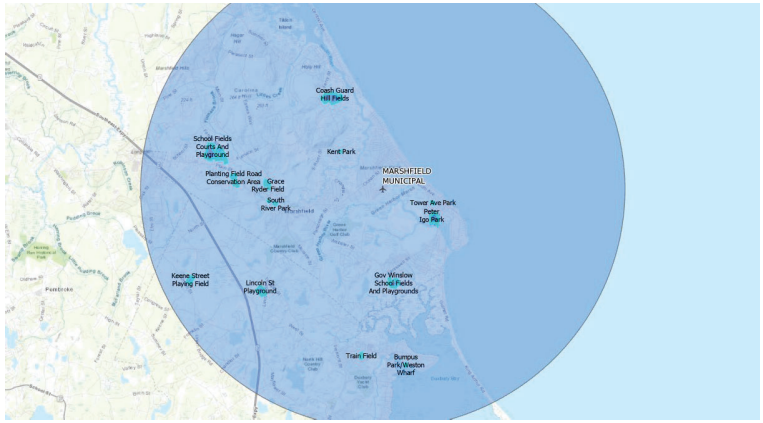


Signage Plan for Drone “No Fly Zones”

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- MassDOT Aeronautics Division staff used ArcGIS Pro software to complete a geospatial analysis to locate all parks, playgrounds, and fields within a 5-mile radius of public use general aviation airports
- This geo-location analysis identified 870 sites across the Commonwealth where “No Drone Zone” signs may be warranted
- Aeronautics Division staff are currently working with airport managers to refine locations for sign installations within the municipalities surrounding the airports



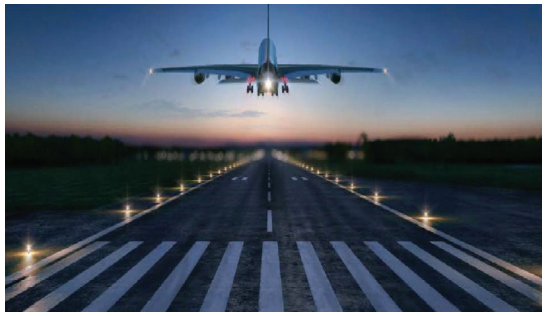


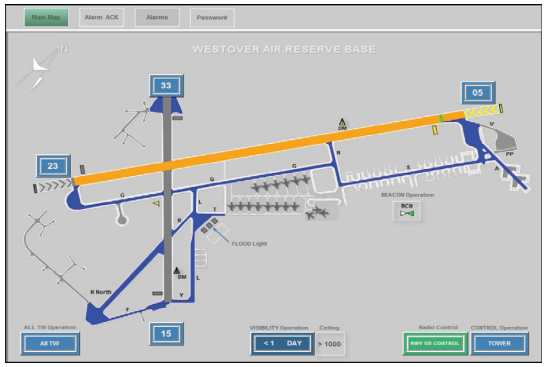
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Westover Metropolitan Airport: Pilot-controlled Lighting & Extended Hours Initiative

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- Westover Metropolitan Airport has a strong partnership with Westover Air Reserve Base and both share the same runways
- The growth of the Airport has been hindered because it lacked the ability to remain open for overnight operations
- Since Westover's control tower shut down at night, planes weren't allowed to land at the airport after 11 p.m.
- After 3 years of negotiations, the Airport received FAA approval in November 2018 to conduct 24-hour operations
- Using a $15K gaming grant provided by MGM Springfield and a $163K MassDOT grant, the airport developed a pilot controlled lighting system





Westover Metropolitan Airport: Pilot-controlled Lighting & Extended Hours Initiative

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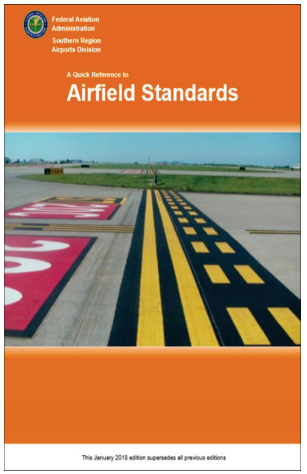
- Pilot Controlled Lighting allows pilots to activate the runway lights by utilizing on-board aircraft radios
- Airport staff will ensure the airfield is safe during overnight operations and that services such as refueling are available
- The extended operation hours offer flexibility that will make Westover more competitive with other airports
- Since most maintenance operations occur at night, the Airport is also looking to expand their aircraft maintenance business by bringing in a Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) operator interested in relocating to Westover
- The presence of an MRO on the airport would bring high-paying jobs for aircraft mechanics to the local region

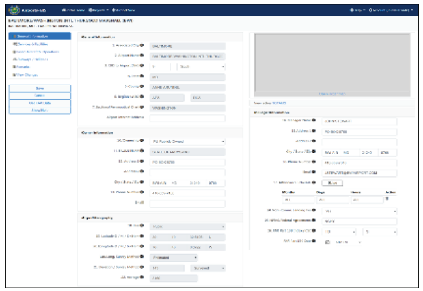




FAA Airport 5010 Inspection Program

- MassDOT is under contract to inspect at least 1/3 of the state's 35 public use, general aviation airports each calendar year
- Inspection discrepancies are reported directly to the FAA through the Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP)
- The previous 5010 website was managed by a third party vendor and there was a significant delay in notifying the FAA of inspection results
- The ADIP depository provides immediate access to critical operational and safety data for use by FAA, MassDOT, and airport staff
- This data can be used as a tool to better collaborate on planning, design, operations, maintenance and funding decisions
- The FAA is developing new policy to standardize and incorporate the collection of drone data for use in future airport 5010 inspections





5010